

**BOARD AGENDA ITEM**

**June 13, 2023**

***SUBJECT:***

Expansion of District Participation in Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

***BACKGROUND INFORMATION:***

The District currently has 22 community eligibility provision (CEP) schools, comprising approximately 40% of the District's enrollment, where all students are eligible for no-cost breakfast and lunch. The District's initial participation in CEP commenced in 2018 – 2019 with 16 schools. Additional CEP schools were added in 2019 – 2020 and 2020 – 2021.

***ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATION:***

The Chief Financial Officer and School Food Service department representatives, including Chartwells representatives, have worked with SC Department of Education (SCDE) Office of Health & Nutrition officials to explore the financial viability of the universal CEP for Aiken County Schools. Under universal CEP, all students at all schools would be eligible for breakfast and lunch as no cost. The review considered each school's current enrollment, each school's identified student percentage (ISP), meal participation for the past two years, as well as school grouping scenarios that would be the most advantageous for the District. Based on the review, the move to universal CEP is considered financially viable and beneficial for the District and its students.

The SCDE must receive notice of the addition of CEP schools by June 30, 2023. While no changes are anticipated at this time, the District will continue to monitor CEP viability in future years.

***RECOMMENDATION:***

Approve implementation of universal CEP for the 2023 – 2024 school year and notification to the SCDE.

***PREPARED BY:***

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